

## PROCESSING FEDERAL DOCUMENT DISPOSAL LISTS DURING RENOVATIONS

*by Daina Bohr,  
Indiana State Library,  
Indianapolis, Indiana*



**R**enovations and restoration of the Indiana State Library and Historical Building began in June 2001 and were completed in August 2003. While the building closed for only a few weeks to the public over the course of the renovations, large portions of the stacks were inaccessible for months at a time. Although this situation periodically created a challenging work environment, staff members overcame this challenge by creating new ways of working.

Some of these new ways included increased flexibility in managing disposal lists, an integral component of the Indiana State Library's participation in the federal documents depository program. A disposal list is a list of federal documents that federal depository libraries wish, for a variety of reasons, to withdraw from their holdings<sup>1</sup> and make available to other libraries.

Due to the Indiana State Library's status as the regional federal depository for the state of Indiana, it has first priority to claim documents that appear on the disposal lists created by the 32 Indiana selective depositories. This provides an opportunity for the Indiana State Library to fill any gaps in the federal documents collection, replace items damaged or lost by patrons, and obtain additional copies of high-demand titles.

The processing of disposal lists is an ongoing task, requiring regular access to the federal documents collection to physically check the shelves for items on the list. However, the renovations of the building began in the basement – the location of the compact shelving holding the federal document print collection. This created two problems for the librarians processing the disposal lists.

The first problem involved moving a portion of the federal documents collection to other areas of the building, requiring considerable planning and work. To solve this problem, staff members held meetings to review architectural drawings of shelving areas. Then staff calculated the number of volumes that could be moved to each area. This included determining the number of shelves needed and the new locations for items already on those shelves. Several weeks of labor,

during which staff moved thousands of items to new permanent locations, completed this task.

The second problem was physical access to the stacks housing the federal documents collection, once the collection was moved. For several weeks the storage area in the basement was accessible only to the construction crew. Librarians assisted patrons who were unable to access needed information from the Indiana State Library's collections by locating the information in alternative formats or referring patrons to other depository libraries within Indiana. Fortunately, staff members were granted limited access to the collection within a short time frame. With access to the collections restored, patrons could obtain the information they needed, and the staff could resume work on disposal lists for the federal document depository collection.

Throughout the renovations, a librarian, at times wearing a hardhat while carrying a disposal list, would tackle the often-difficult working conditions to review the list and obtain the information needed. On occasion, access to the basement was limited to a staircase filled with dust, cement chips, and construction crews, who always seemed to be going the other way. However, the Indiana State Library staff members were adaptable and prevailed, locating the necessary information for processing the disposal lists.

After processing a disposal list the librarian sent the list to staff in the Catalog Division of the Indiana State Library. Cataloging staff verified the missing items against the federal document shelflist catalogs and holdings records. If the federal document collections needed an item, cataloging staff claimed the item from the list. If the collection did not need a particular item, staff shared the information with other depository libraries.

With the renovations to the Indiana State Library and Historical Building now complete, staff members have unhindered access to the federal document collection. Staff will continue to use disposal lists to ensure that the Indiana State Library acquires, maintains, and makes available one of the most comprehensive and historically rich federal documents collections in the state.

<sup>1</sup> Indiana federal depositories use the following materials as guides to withdraw documents:

1.) "Indiana Guidelines for Disposal of U.S. Government Documents"

2.) Superseded List: "Introduction", "Understanding the Retention Instructions"

3.) Instructions to Depository Libraries

Chapter 3, Section G [why is there no space between 3 & 4 when there is between 4 & 9?]

Chapter 4, Section C

Chapter 4, Section D

Chapter 4, Section E

Chapter 4, Section F

Chapter 4, Section G

Chapter 4, Section H

Chapter 4, Section I

Chapter 4, Section J

Chapter 9, Section B

Chapter 9, Section C

4.) Federal Depository Library Manual

Chapter 2, Section 1, B7

Chapter 2, Section 2, A4

Chapter 4, Section 2, F

5.) U.S. Code, Title 44, Chapter 19

Section §1911

Section §1912